



UNI PEER MENTOR PROGRAM RECEIVES AASCU AWARD

Award. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) has announced that the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) will receive an Excellence and Innovation Award for its course-embedded mentor program for first-year students.

Program. The awarded program was highlighted in a [Fiscal Update article](#) in September of this year. The AASCU said the program creates a supportive environment inside and outside the classroom by connecting incoming freshmen with faculty, other students, staff, and support services. The announcement described the program that “involves selecting rising sophomores to return as mentors within courses they completed during the previous year and pairing them with faculty members to create vibrant, supportive classroom communities designed for first-year students. Since the program’s inception in fall 2011, the retention rate of students enrolled in one of these courses has been 6 to 8 percent higher as compared to those students who did not enroll in a first-year-only section.”

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